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OTHER FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

United Nations Development Fund for Women

Report of the Administrator

INTRODUCTION

1. The legislative framework for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) is contained in General Assembly resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984, in which it was decided that the activities of the United Nations Decade for Women should be continued through the establishment of a "separate and identifiable entity in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme, which will play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations overall system of development co-operation". The resolution also defines the management arrangements for UNIFEM and its relationship with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), including the establishment of a Consultative Committee, whose function is to advise the Administrator on matters of policy affecting UNIFEM and to monitor the arrangements for managing the Fund.

I. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A. Setting priorities to achieve catalytic impact

2. Recognizing the magnitude of the challenge in its mandate and the limits of its resources, UNIFEM has invested effort over the past two years in defining and channelling its priorities to maximize catalytic impact. The initial effort was staff collaboration in the preparation of a UNIFEM mission statement based on the General Assembly mandate in which long-term priority sectors and modalities for action are identified. Regional programmes, presently for Asia and the Pacific and Western Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, translate long-term

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priorities into shorter-term action plans suited to the specific requirements and conditions within each region. From defining longer-term priorities to operationalizing shorter-term action plans, UNIFEM planning and implementation are imbedded in formal and informal relations with UNDP. The role of the Resident Representatives as UNIFEM field representative as well as the participation by the Regional Bureaux and the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation (BPPE) participation in UNIFEM project appraisal committees are indicative of the formal relationships. There is ongoing informal consultation on a range of thematic issues, as, for example, with UNDP and their trust funds on development modalities for small enterprises.

B. Longer-term priorities

3. The UNIFEM Mission Statement identifies the longer-term priority of the Fund as "support for the efforts of the women of the developing world to achieve their objectives for economic and social development and equality". It calls for UNIFEM support to make a difference by "identifying those key areas where UNIFEM support can have a significant impact in terms of enabling women to carry out their economic and civic activities and to participate in and benefit from decision-making on the use of mainstream development resources". Within these key areas, UNIFEM will work with women and their partners "to design, implement and evaluate strategic programmes, projects and activities" and on the basis of that experience, to identify and disseminate interventions which meet women's objectives and to be "an effective instrument of advocacy and action in the service of the women of the developing countries".

4. To sharpen its focus further, UNIFEM will concentrate for the longer term on two sectors of obvious, strategic importance to women: food security and trade and industry. Work in these two key sectors is supported by technical concentrations on credit, technology transfer, and small business development, which correspond to the principal constraints on women's productivity: time, energy and credit. A final dimension of the longer-term strategy of UNIFEM is the commitment to working at both the grass-roots level and at the macro or policy level. UNIFEM seeks to experiment with innovative ways of involving women at the grass-roots level and, at the same time, recognizes the need to create a more favourable policy environment within which direct support to women's grass-roots activities can flourish. Support to national planning, technical planning and implementation and to national machineries for the advancement of women are critical ways of strengthening women's voices in national development decision-making.

5. The technical concentrations and the grass-roots and policy-level dimensions of the UNIFEM approach find application in the key programme sectors in each of the three regions. Food security, the first key area, encompasses women's roles in the food cycle and in meeting basic household needs. The longer-term priority here is to build women's productive capacities in all stages of the food cycle, to reduce the work burden of production, and to contribute to a policy environment which recognizes and supports women's crucial role in food security. Food-cycle activities, and UNIFEM support to them, include land preparation, production, harvesting, storage, processing, preservation, transport, distribution and

marketing of staple food crops such as cereals and tubers, as well as fruits, vegetables, oil seeds and fish and animal products. Given the acute food availability problems in Africa, food cycle activities, and particularly food technologies, have initially had the greatest concentration in that region. However, food security is a long-term priority for all regions.

6. Integral to the food security focus are environmental concerns. This concern will intensify over the next few years, particularly as UNIFEM prepares for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to ensure that women are properly on the environment agenda. The experience of UNIFEM itself confirms the link between women and the environment. Women shoulder their responsibilities for providing families with food, fuel and water while struggling with the management of deteriorating resources. So long as women remain poor and have few choices, fragile eco-systems will be threatened. Women are key players in maintaining the world's resource base and must be seen as such.

7. The second priority sector for intervention over the longer term is trade and industry, and, in particular, support to small-scale manufacturing and trading activities in which many women participate. In many countries, women represent over 50 per cent of small entrepreneurs but represent only a small portion of the clients of training, financial or other institutions established to assist small enterprises. Here, UNIFEM concentrates on the identification of constraints faced by women in establishing viable commercial enterprises, on developing innovative approaches to overcoming such constraints, and on encouraging credit, training, pricing and other policies which reflect gender consideration.

C. Shorter-term priorities

8. The shorter-term priorities take shape within the regional programmes, which are refined and updated every two years in collaboration with the regions and are reviewed by the Consultative Committee. They identify the region-specific goals for programme and advocacy during the two-year period and the operational strategies for achieving those goals. They also provide scope for identifying and acting upon emerging issues and new requirements. Emerging issues first addressed at the regional level may provide the basis for a global emphasis at a later stage.

9. The Africa Programme for 1991-1992, for example, identifies operational strategies in the areas of food security and small-enterprise development. Building on the experience of previous grass-roots food technology projects, UNIFEM will seek to promote the wide use of technologies demonstrated as efficient and environmentally sound. Other activities will focus on facilitating access to transport markets and credit and increasing women's access to diversified, profitable businesses in areas such as food processing, housing, construction, tool production, plumbing, repairs and other viable services. At the same time, the Africa Programme will support efforts to include women in national and mainstream activities through initiatives which include training in gender-sensitive planning techniques for planners and policy makers as well as by providing assistance to national machineries to enable their effective involvement in national planning.

10. The Asia and Pacific Programme, concentrating on the agriculture and industrial sectors, has identified impact points which include macro-policies, data and statistics and gender-sensitizing training as the points of intervention with potential for impact on large numbers of women in Asia and the Pacific. In the 1991-1992 period, it will focus on three approaches. These include projects: (a) that are on the cutting edge of creating new opportunities for women; (b) that expand the level of participation in successful small projects; and (c) that bring gender expertise to the formulation of large-scale projects in order to ensure women's appropriate access to development resources.

11. The Latin American and Caribbean Programme for 1991-1992 seeks to consolidate its experience in small enterprise and employment, agriculture and food technologies. Building on the model developed for the Caribbean, subregional strategies will be developed for Mexico and Central America, the Andean countries, Brazil and the Southern Cone, taking into account the social and economic diversity of the region and the ways in which the limited resources of UNIFEM can have greatest impact. Ongoing activities will give priority to access to financial resources - which has been identified as a need common to women of the whole region. This will include support to loan guarantee mechanisms; a debt-for-development swap; training bankers in non-traditional credit analysis techniques; and training women in management, accounting, marketing and financial planning.

12. Evolving social priorities in the past few years as well as the current situation in the Arab States call for a timely response from UNIFEM. UNIFEM has consulted with women's organizations and Governments in Western Asia to develop a programme approach for that area. Recognizing the distinctive characteristics of the Arab world and seeking to enhance the Fund's substantial collaboration with the Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe (RBASE), UNIFEM is exploring ways within its existing framework to coordinate programmes for Western Asia and Northern Africa.

13. The three regional programmes also offer a framework for acting on emerging issues. In Africa, for example, the regional programme provided the basis and the funding for preparatory work on a major UNIFEM project in newly independent Namibia, which will provide resources for the development of small-scale industries and other interventions to address Namibia's high rate of female unemployment. Environmental issues, originally addressed in the regional programmes, are now coordinated through a global UNIFEM programme, increasing capacity to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992.

D. Quality control

14. In an effort to improve the quality of programming, UNIFEM has reviewed, modified, and streamlined its system for programme and project development, appraisal and approval, including criteria for project selection. This revised system is now in operation. UNIFEM also places high priority on making monitoring and evaluation one of its strongest functions. The role of UNIFEM differs from

that of larger funding organizations. Its mandate, to be experimental and catalytic, to test new approaches, and to be an advocate for women, requires a capacity to document the process and product of project experience, and to disseminate the findings. In addition, UNIFEM seeks to promote a variety of relatively smaller and carefully directed interventions, all serving one common theme. This calls for a programmatic approach to evaluation supported by resources directed to this purpose in UNIFEM headquarters. UNIFEM needs the capacity to dedicate time and responsibility for establishing procedures for monitoring and evaluation, for coordinating evaluation priorities, and for analysing and disseminating lessons learned.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

15. The restructuring of UNIFEM human resources is one of the most visible outputs of more than a year of organizational development. Characteristic of the restructuring is a devolution of responsibility in order to make full use of staff capacity. Operational management rests with the Deputy Director, to whom the programme units report. This frees the Director to devote more time to outreach and fund-raising activities. Management of programme development as well as advocacy for effective women-in-development programming have been strengthened by the placement of senior programme advisers in strategic African, Asian, and Latin American locations.

16. Underlying the structural changes are a number of systems changes in the areas of budget, programme, and work management intended to enhance UNIFEM effectiveness and efficiency. A computerized budget management system for programme, project and administrative budgets has been designed and installed and all UNIFEM staff have been trained in its use. The system builds on expenditure and other data available from UNDP computer systems, provides a tool for budget planning and monitoring, and facilitates accurate and timely reporting.

17. During 1990, a management priority has been to enable staff to increase project delivery rates. Key elements were an assessment of the bottlenecks in project implementation by type of implementing agency; orientation of programme staff to improved management of implementation; and the exploration of new ways to simplify execution. During 1991, UNIFEM will install new procedures, using existing UNDP modalities, which will speed implementation and enhance UNIFEM capacity to manage increasing resources. Already during 1990 there were marked reductions in the interval between project approvals and the start of implementation.

18. UNIFEM initiated its own work planning system in 1989 and in 1990 began implementation of the Performance Appraisal Review (PAR). UNIFEM hopes to use the PAR as a management tool supporting professional development and the devolution of responsibility. UNIFEM organized or made available training opportunities for its staff to build specific skills in computer operation, fund raising, planning and in presentation and public speaking, as well as to strengthen management capacity in supervision and communications.

III. PUBLIC SUPPORT

A. Mobilization of funds

19. Growing awareness of the critical role that women play in the development process mobilizes untapped resources and is gradually being translated into contributions to UNIFEM. At the Pledging Conference for 1991, total pledges were estimated at $9.4 million, a 13 per cent increase over pledges for 1990. Indeed, UNIFEM core resources have nearly doubled since the 1988-1989 biennium budget, going from $4.9 million in 1987 to $9.4 million projected for 1991. Implementation of a new formula for partial funding (see decision 90/42) will release an additional $2 million from reserves. The rate of growth in the core budget has been matched by increases in extrabudgetary support. For instance, bilateral donors continue to give extrabudgetary support to major projects developed by UNIFEM. UNIFEM has managed these growing programme resources with zero staff growth for two bienniums.

20. Since the beginning of 1990, UNIFEM has had a comprehensive fund-raising plan which coordinates all the elements of UNIFEM external relations and which involves staff at all levels. The goal of the plan is to assure continuing and growing funding for a strong programme. The key to implementing the plan has been a focus on maintaining and building support among the UNIFEM special constituency. This constituency includes women from around the world who worked to create the Fund and to nurture its growth in the years after the 1975 International Women's Year Conference in Mexico. It includes women in the private sector, women parliamentarians around the world, academics, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and women's groups. It is in tapping increased resources from this constituency that the greatest potential of UNIFEM for additionality rests. The efforts of the Director and staff are supplemented by the support of a UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador, who is a former member of Parliament from an African country.

B. National committees and NGOs

21. To foster this natural support, UNIFEM works closely with the 10 UNIFEM committees which serve as advocates in the donor countries, both for women in development issues and for UNIFEM. National committees have doubled in number in the past year, and there is active interest in six other countries for the formation of national committees. National committees and NGOs also make substantial contributions to UNIFEM programmes. The Finnish National Committee, for example, gave $235,000 to UNIFEM projects in 1989. In 1990, ZONTA International pledged $500,000 for three additional UNIFEM projects, which will bring their total contribution to UNIFEM to $1.5 million.

C. UNIFEM/Noel Foundation awards

22. The major effort of UNIFEM to achieve high visibility for the women in development issues has been the launching of the UNIFEM Awards ceremony. In addition to honouring four women political leaders, the Awards ceremony served to emphasize an active participatory role for all women. The Secretary General

presented the awards at the October 1990 ceremony which brought together a distinguished array of men and women from diverse regions and walks of life. Future awards, to be presented biennially, will honour women's leadership roles in other fields. The Award is made possible through the Noel Foundation, which will make available $1,000,000 in 1991 for UNIFEM programmes. The launching of the Awards enables UNIFEM to broaden its contacts in the European and American corporate and political communities and provides an opportunity to acknowledge the potential of women everywhere.

Annex

RESOURCE PLANNING TABLE FOR UNIFEM, 1987-1991

(In millions of US dollars)

	Actual 1987	Actual 1988	Actual 1989	Est. 1990	Est. 1991
I. Fund's balance from previous year:					
Resources from previous year	12.25	12.19	12.79	14.58	16.02
Deduct: operational reserve	0.00	0.00	6.70	5.80	6.21
Total financial resources (A)	12.25	12.19	6.09	8.78	9.81
II. Resources made available during the year:					
Voluntary contributions received	4.77	6.01	6.60	8.26	9.40
Cost-sharing	0.05	0.21	0.40	0.37	0.60
Donations	0.23	0.18	0.55	0.37	0.60
Interest and other income	1.19	1.25	1.66	1.30	1.30
Decrease in operational reserve	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00
Total made available during the year (B)	6.24	7.65	10.11	10.30	11.90
III. Utilization of resources during the year					
Project expenditure	4.96	5.05	4.82	6.00	6.72
Reimbursement of programme support costs	0.18	0.27	0.32	0.54	0.57
Technical support services	0.00	0.35	0.37	0.50	0.53
Administrative services costs	1.19	1.39	1.79	1.79	1.90
Total programme expenditure	6.33	7.06	7.30	8.83	9.72
Increase in operational reserve	0.00	6.70	0.00	0.41	0.11
Prior years' adjustments	-0.03	-0.01	0.12	0.03	0.02
Total use of resources (C)	6.30	13.75	7.42	9.27	9.85
IV. Total Fund balance at year-end (A+B-C)	12.19	6.09	8.78	9.81	11.86
V. Movement in operational reserve:					
Reserve from previous year	0.00	0.00	6.70	5.80	6.21
Change in reserve during the year	0.00	6.70	-0.90	0.41	0.11
Reserve level at year-end	0.00	6.70	5.80	6.21	6.32
VI. Outstanding recommended project approvals and unspent allocations from previous years	12.25	12.19	12.79	14.58	16.02
Add: approved projects during the year	5.05	5.91	7.05	8.01	8.81
Deduct: expenditures during the year	5.11	5.31	5.26	6.57	7.31
Balance at year end	12.19	12.79	14.58	16.02	17.52